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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No. 004747.P001Total Pages 5First Named Inventor or Application Identifier Gavin S. H. ChengExpress Mail Label No. EL 431 887 357 US

ADDRESS TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents
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Washington, D. C. 20231

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

1. X Fee Transmittal Form
(Submit an original, and a duplicate for fee processing)
2. X Specification (Total Pages 21 including cover page)
(preferred arrangement set forth below)
 - Descriptive Title of the Invention
 - Cross References to Related Applications
 - Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
 - Reference to Microfiche Appendix
 - Background of the Invention
 - Brief Summary of the Invention
 - Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)
 - Detailed Description
 - Claims
 - Abstract of the Disclosure
3. X Drawings(s) (35 USC 113) (Total Sheets 8)
4. X Oath or Declaration (Total Pages 5)
 - a. x Newly Executed (Original or Copy)
 - b. Copy from a Prior Application (37 CFR 1.63(d))
(for Continuation/Divisional with Box 17 completed) (Note Box 5 below)
 - i. DELETIONS OF INVENTOR(S) Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).
5. Incorporation By Reference (useable if Box 4b is checked)
The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.
6. Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)

7.

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a.
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ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS

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March 3, 2000
(Date signed)

Serial/Patent No.: *** Filing/Issue Date: ***

Client: Muse Communication Corporation

Title: Method And System For Attracting Visits To Web Sites.

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Date Mailed: March 3, 2000 Docket Due Date: ****

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PATENT

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION

FOR

Method and System for Attracting Visits to Web Sites

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Method and System for Attracting Visits to Web Sites

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

10

This application is related to pending U.S. patent applications No.: 09/375,476 and 60/096,884, filed respectively on August 17, 1998 and August 16, 1999, each of which is assigned to the same assignee as the present application and are hereby incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

15

The present invention is related to the area of Internet browser applications and more particularly related to a method and system for attracting users to visit to web pages/sites when browsing to other sites.

Background of the Related Art

20

In the field of Internet browsing, the popularity of web sites may vary significantly. Most web sites, however, do share the common interest to increase their number of visits (hits). By increasing their number of visits, the web site are able to potentially charge higher rates for posting advertisements on their web sites. In addition, if a web site is offering products for sell, a more popular web site is likely to be able to sell more products.

25

Nevertheless, becoming a popular web site is difficult. Attracting first time visitors presents the challenge of initially informing the potential visitors of the web site's presence. Prior techniques for attracting visits to web sites include simply presenting advertisements for a web site on television or on the radio or in magazines/newspapers. However, advertising a web site through the media may not be effective because the potential web visitor may not remember to visit the advertised web site the next time they are browsing the

30

5 Internet. Alternatively, the potential web visitor may not remember the address of the advertised web site the next time they are browsing the Internet.

As a result, there is a need for a improved technique of attracting visits to web sites by presenting links to the web sites to be visited at a more effective time and place, which is more likely to produce increased visits to a web site.

10 In addition, there is a further need to present the links of the web sites to be visited in fashion that is more likely to appeal to the curiosity of the potential web site visitors, in order to potentially increase the likelihood of a visit to the web site.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A method and system of facilitating access to web sites is described. In one embodiment, the method as performed by the system includes providing a first three-dimensional (3D) module interface to receive requests for Web pages. In response to receiving a request for a first Web page, displaying a second 3D module interface including a set of links to a plurality of separate Web pages. Each link of the plurality of Web pages includes a representation of a number visits to each of said separate Web pages.

In one embodiment, the representation of the number of visits to a Web page includes a graphical representation. In addition, in one embodiment, displaying the second 3D module interface including the set of links to the plurality of separate Web pages includes scrolling the second 3D module interface across a display of a client computer.

5

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will be readily understood by the following detailed description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals designate like structural elements, and in which:

10

Figure 1 shows a schematic configuration in which the present invention may be practiced;

Figure 2A shows an exemplary 3D viewing environment that may be used to practice present invention;

15

Figure 2B shows a top view of a 3D viewing environment including a plurality of walls or display areas;

Figure 2C shows an example of a perspective in a 3D viewing environment that includes a conventional web display, a stream video, an email icon, a chat bar, and advertisement contexts and, each can function independently;

20

Figure 3 is a flow diagram describing the steps of attracting visits to web sites in accordance with one embodiment;

Figure 4 illustrates the accumulation of hits/visits for a plurality of web sites;

25

Figure 5 illustrates an example of a three-dimensional module interface having a set of links to a plurality of web pages/sites, according to one embodiment; and

Figure 6 illustrates an example of a server include a first unit of logic to attract visits to web sites in accordance with one embodiment.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In the following detailed description of the present invention, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a through understanding of the present invention. However, it will become obvious to those skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well known methods, procedures, components, and circuitry have not been described in detail to avoid unnecessarily obscuring aspects of the present invention.

The detailed description of the present invention is presented largely in terms of procedures, steps, logic blocks, processing, and other symbolic representations that directly or indirectly resemble the operations of data processing devices coupled to networks. These process descriptions and representations are typically used by those experienced or skilled in the art to most effectively convey the substance of their work to others skilled in the art.

The method along with the system to be described in detail below is a self-consistent sequence of processes leading to one or more desired results. It proves convenient at times, principally for reasons of common usage, to refer to data as messages, requests, values, elements, symbols, terms, numbers, or the like. It should be borne in mind that all of these similar terms are to be associated with the appropriate physical quantities and are merely convenient labels applied to these quantities.

Referring now to the drawings, in which like numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views. **Figure 1** shows a system configuration **100** in which one embodiment may be practiced. Data network **102** is a landline network that may be the Internet, the Intranet and a data network of other private and public networks.

5 Coupled to network **100** are a client computer **104**, an application server **104** and a portal server **108**. Client computer **104** representing one of numerous devices coupled to network **102** may include, but not be limited to, a personal computer and a wireless mobile device. Typically, client computer **104** is operated by a user who desires to communicate
10 with other devices over network **102**.

According to one embodiment, client computer **104** is loaded with an application or program that is herein referred to as a 3D viewing environment module or simply 3D browser. The detailed description of the 3D browser is provided in the reference 09/375,476. When the
15 program is executed in a processor of client computer **104**, the 3D browser provides an interactive 3D viewing environment or a 3D overlay for the user to browse various resources in network **100**.

Referring now to **Figure 2A**, there is shown an exemplary 3D viewing environment **200** displayed by a 3D browser. Walls or display
20 areas **202-210** are applicable for respectively displaying network resources. Specifically, each of the walls may be perceived as an independently operable conventional web browser, such as Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer.

As used herein, a display, a screen display, a displayed web page,
25 or a displayed window is an image presented on a display screen which is a physical display apparatus in a device, such as a CRT or LCD monitor commonly seen with a personal computer. For example, a file that constitutes a display may be an HTML file. An image or a display thereof appears on a display screen when the file is read by a browser.

30 In addition to the walls **202-210**, there are various applications **211-213** in 3D viewing environment **200**. These applications may include, but not be limited to, email, alert, and chat, preferably represented as a 3D

5 icon that could be changed from different viewing angles as a user
navigates in 3D viewing environment **200**.

Figure 2B illustrates a top view of a 3D viewing environment **220**
that includes walls **222-231**. In one embodiment, a user is graphically
situated at **234** looking at wall **222** and can at any time move to any other
10 wall or walls as desired. One of the advantages provided by a 3D viewing
environment is to permit a user to navigate therein from one wall to
another, just like walking in a museum or shopping wall setting.

Figure 2C shows an example of a perspective **240** in a 3D viewing
environment that includes a conventional web display **242**, a stream video
15 **244**, an email icon **246**, a chat bar **248**, and advertisement contexts **250**
and **252**, each functioning independently. For example, stream video **244**
is playing while chat bar **248** is active and email icon **246** receiving mails
without obscuring each other. As noted, advertisement contexts **252** is
partially shown and may be shown completely when the user
20 navigates/scrolls towards the right of the screen, which may cause display
242 and chat bar **248** to become partially shown at left.

Referring now back to **Figure 1**, application server **106** is one of
many servers on network **100** that supports one or more web sites and
provides interactive resources to be displayed at the client computer (e.g.,
25 the 3D viewing environment of **Figures 2A-2C**). Consider the example of
the application server **106** supporting a web site for a shopping mall.
Rather than showing a number of static hyperlinks or icons, each
representing a store in the mall as typically seen from the conventional
web browser, the shopping mall is electronically structured for the 3D
30 viewing environment. In such an example, each of the store fronts may be
shown as one of the walls or 3D icons that permit users to “walk” in and
browse in the store.

5 Portal server **108**, as shown in the data network, may support a web search engine for the client computers, or related portal services, such as, news, white and yellow pages directories, free e-mail, discussion groups, online shopping and other types of links to separate web sites. In one embodiment of the present invention, the portal server **108**, provides to the client computers a 3D viewing environment/ module interface, as discussed above.

Figure 3 illustrates a flow diagram describing the steps of attracting visits according to one embodiment. It should be noted that the steps in **Figure 3** do not inherently indicate any particular order nor imply any limitations in the present invention. In step **302**, a portal server receives an input from a client computer coupled to the portal server via the Internet, or alternatively via an intranet connection.

The input received is interpreted to be a request to interconnect the client computer with a designated web page/web site, typically hosted by a separate application server. The designated web page selected by the client computer may be selected from a list of links displayed via a browser on the client computer, as provided by the portal sever, or may be input by a user at the client computer (e.g., a Universal Resource Locator).

In **step 304**, in response to the request from the client computer for the selected web page, the portal server initiates navigating to retrieve the selected web page. In one embodiment, in addition to navigating to retrieve the selected web page, in step **306**, the portal sever provides to the client computer a 3D module interface that is displayed at the client computer via a 3D browser at the client computer.

More specifically, in one embodiment the portal sever further provides to the client computer a set of links to a plurality of separate Web pages or sites (pages and sites are used interchangeably hereafter). The links are displayed within the 3D module interface, as displayed at the

5 client computer. In one embodiment, the 3D module interface is displayed at the client computer during the time period that elapses while the portal server is retrieving the web page previously selected by the client computer.

10 In an alternative embodiment, the set of links to the plurality of separate web pages as displayed in the 3D module may be dynamically selected by the portal server each time it retrieves a web page as requested by a user at a client computer. Moreover, the set of links to the plurality of separate web pages may correspond to a subject matter related to the web page requested by a user at the client computer.

15 In one embodiment, at least some of the plurality of links to separate web pages embedded in the 3D module include a representation of a number of visits to the respective web pages. For example, the representation may be a numerical representation indicating the number of visits to the respective web page within a recent pre-designated period of time (e.g., hour, day, week, month.) Alternatively, the representation of
20 the number of visits may be a rating on a scale (e.g., 1-10). The rating could be a scale relative to other links to web pages as included in the 3D module interface. Further, the representation of the number of visits to a group of web pages may be from a group of paid subscribers to the host of the portal server for showing the popularity of the respective web pages in
25 a hope to further attract more visits thereto.

In one embodiment, the number of visits corresponding to the respective web pages to be represented in the 3D module interface may be accumulated and maintained at the portal server, or alternative at a
30 separate server. For example, as shown in **Figure 4**, the number of hits/visits for the respective web sites, as designated by their domain names, may be accumulated and stored on a server every time a request is made to visit a respective web site.

5 In addition, the representation of the number of visits to the
respective web pages may be shown as a graphical representation. The
graphical representation could have a graphical correlation to the web
page, to which the graphical representation corresponds.

10 In one embodiment, the 3D module is scrolled across the screen of
the client computer (horizontally or vertically), in an evolving manner.
For example, the scrolling 3D module may appear on the display of the
client computer as a scene in a window from a moving car. In a further
example, as illustrated in **Figure 5**, the 3D module could represent a
15 revolving globe with respective links to the plurality of web sites provided
as dots on continents. Beams could be shown as trickling feeding to the
dot/links, the density thereof representing the popularity of the respective
sites (i.e., the number of times/frequency that the respective site has been
visited). As a result, the popularity representation may attract visits to
those dots/links.

20 In addition, the set of links to the plurality of separate web pages
may be posted within the 3D module as a result of paying a fee (e.g., a
subscription to the portal server). For example, in one embodiment, the
greater the payment to post a link within the 3D module, the earlier within
the 3D module interface the respective link may be displayed.

25 In one embodiment, the duration for displaying the 3D module
interface which includes the links to the plurality of web pages could be
extended beyond the time period it takes the portal server to retrieve the
selected web page. In such an embodiment, the 3D module including the
links to the plurality of web pages would continue to be displayed at the
30 client computer for an extended period time in place of the web page
previously selected by a user at the client computer.

 In step **308**, it is determined if a user at the client computer (where
the 3D module is displayed) has selected/highlighted a link displayed in

5 the interface. If the user has selected a link in the 3D module interface, in
step 310 the portal server initiates navigating to retrieve the selected web
page. In one embodiment, the recently selected web page could be
retrieved and displayed at the client computer in place of the previously
selected web page. Alternatively, the recently selected web page could be
10 retrieved and displayed at the client computer concurrently with the
previously selected web page.

In step 312, in further response to a user at the client computer
selecting one of the links to the plurality of web pages, the portal server
increments a count of visits to the respective web site. In one
15 embodiment, the count can be stored locally at the portal server, or
alternatively remotely at a separate server, as previously discussed.

In step 314, if none of the links to the plurality of web pages in the
3D module have been selected while the portal server has navigated to
retrieve the previously selected web page, the portal server proceeds to
20 retrieve and display the originally selected web page.

The method for attracting visits to web sites/web pages, as
described above, can be stored in memory of the portal server, as a set of
instructions to be executed, as shown by way of example in **Figure 6**. The
server as shown in **Figure 6**, includes a server module having a Domain
25 name manager, a log file manager, along with the logic to attract visits to
Web sites, as previously mentioned. The domain manager manages a list
of domains (names of web sites) along with a number of visits to each of
the web sites for a predefined period. Log file manager determines if a
request received from the network will cause a new entry to the list in the
domain manager and provide necessary statistic data representing the
30 popularity of the sites in the list to a terminal device that sent the request.
For example, a request received from a terminal device is for
www.xyzcorp.com, log file manager first check with the domain list in

5 the domain manager to see if www.xyzcorp.com is being statistically
measured with respect to the number of visits to the site. If it is found that
www.xyzcorp.com is not in the list, the name may be added into the list
so that the popularity thereof can be measured. If www.xyzcorp.com is in
10 the list, the domain manager may be caused to increment its measurement
on the particular site. Alternatively, the log file manager is used to control
a list of certain sites, preferably paid for by the respective owner thereof,
that the popularity of these sites should be always measured and displayed
whenever there is an opportunity to display such information to a terminal
device, hence potentially increasing the number of hits to these sites in the
15 paid list. In addition, there are a processor, storage, and a port to
interconnect the server with a data network, such as the Internet.

In addition, the instructions to perform the method of attracting
visits to Web sites, as described above could alternatively be stored on
other forms of machine-readable medium, including magnetic and optical
20 disks. For example, method of the present invention can be stored on
machine-readable mediums, such as magnetic disks or optical disks, that
are accessible via a disk drive (or computer-readable medium drive).
Further, the instructions can be downloaded into a computing device over
a data network in a form of compiled and linked version.

25 Alternatively, the logic to perform the methods as discussed above,
could be implemented in additional computer and/or machine readable
mediums, such as discrete hardware components such as large-scale
integrated circuits (LSI's), application-specific integrated circuits
(ASIC's), firmware such as electrically erasable programmable read-only
30 memory (EEPROM's); and, electrical, optical, acoustical or other forms of
propagated signals (e.g., carrier waves, infrared signals, digital signals,
etc.); etc.

5 The present invention has been described in sufficient detail with a
certain degree of particularity. It is understood to those skilled in the art
that the present disclosure of embodiments has been made by way of
examples only and that numerous changes in the arrangement and
combination of parts may be resorted without departing from the spirit and
10 scope of the invention as claimed. Accordingly, the scope of the present
invention is defined by the appended claims rather than the forgoing
description of embodiments.

Claims

I claim:

1 1. A method of facilitating access to web sites, the method comprising:
2 executing a 3D viewing environment module to display a portal site in a
3 3D viewing environment;
4 receiving a selection of a first site from a user; the first site identified by a
5 first resource locator and designated by the user in the portal site;
6 generating a request for a first resource from the first site, the request
7 including the first resource locator and to be sent to the data network; and
8 receiving a first display suitable for the 3D viewing environment, the
9 display representing a respective popularity of a number of servers in a predefined
10 time period.

1 2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:
2
3 displaying the portal site substantially close to the first display so that the
4 user can see at least a portion of the portal site.

1 3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the second display illustrates graphically
2 a trickling feeding to each of the servers to appeal to the user to visit one of the
3 servers.

1 4. A method of facilitating access to web sites comprising:
2 providing a designated portal site after receiving a request from a
3 computing device over a data network, the designated portal including a plurality
4 of identifiers, each identifying a server over the data network, wherein the
5 computing device is executing a 3D viewing environment module so that a user
6 can interact with the data network in a 3D viewing environment; and

7 transmitting to the computing device a display suitable for the 3D viewing
8 environment, the display representing a respective popularity of a number of
9 servers in a predefined time period.

1 5. The method of claim 5 further comprising:
2 measuring statistically a number of visits to the servers to account for the
3 popularity of each of the servers.

1 6. The method of claim 6 wherein at least some of the servers are
2 predesignated so that the popularity of each of the at least some of the servers is
3 included in the display.

1 7. The method of claim 5 wherein the transmitting a display to the computing
2 device occurs only when the user selects one of the identifiers.

1 8. A method of facilitating access to Web pages, the method comprising:
2 providing a first three-dimensional (3D) module interface to receive
3 requests for Web pages;
4 in response to receiving a request for a first Web page, providing a second
5 3D module interface including a set of links to a plurality of separate Web pages,
6 each link of said plurality of separate Web pages including a representation of a
7 number visits to each of said separate Web pages.

1 9. The method of claim 9, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are unrelated to said first Web page.

1 10. The method of claim 9, wherein said representations of said number of
2 visits to said separate Web pages includes a graphical representation.

1 11. The method of claim 9 further including;
2 in response to a selection of one of said set of links to said plurality of
3 separate Web pages, providing a Web page corresponding to said selected link.

1 12. The method of claim 12, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are displayed in response to paying a fee.

1 13. The method of claim 9, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are related to said first Web page based on a predetermined
3 criterion.

1 14. The method of claim 9, wherein displaying said second 3D module
2 interface including said set of links to said plurality of separate Web pages
3 includes scrolling said second 3D module interface across a display of a client
4 computer.

1 15. The method of claim 11, wherein said representation of said number of
2 visits to a Web page includes multiple icons corresponding to a number of visits
3 to a web page.

1 16. The method of claim 11, wherein said representation of said number of
2 visits to a Web page includes an icon having a graphical representation
3 corresponding to a subject matter of a respective web page.

1 17. A system to facilitate access to Web pages comprising:
2 a port to a data network; and

3 a first unit of logic to provide a first three-dimensional (3D) module
4 interface to receive requests for Web pages, said first unit of logic in response to
5 receiving a request for a first Web page, displays a second 3D module interface
6 including a set of links to a plurality of separate Web pages, each link of said
7 plurality of separate Web pages including a representation of a number visits to
8 each of said separate Web pages.

1 18. The system of claim 17, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are unrelated to said first Web page.

1 19. The system of claim 17, wherein said representations of said number of
2 visits to said separate Web pages includes a graphical representation.

1 20. The system of claim 17, wherein said first unit of logic, in response to a
2 selection of one of said set of links to said plurality of separate Web pages,
3 provides a Web page corresponding to said selected link.

1 21. The system of claim 17, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are displayed in response to paying a fee.

1 22. The system of claim 17, wherein said set of links to said plurality of
2 separate Web pages are related to said first Web page based on a predetermined
3 criterion.

1 23. The system of claim 17, wherein said first unit of logic displays said
2 second 3D module interface including said set of links to said plurality of separate
3 Web pages, by scrolling said 3D module interface across a display of a client
4 computer.

1 24. The system of claim 17, wherein said representation of said number of
2 visits to said separate Web pages includes multiple graphical representations
3 corresponding to a number of visits to a web page.

1 25. The system of claim 17, wherein said representation of said number of
2 visits to said separate Web pages includes a graphical representation
3 corresponding to a subject matter of a respective web page.

1 26. A machine-readable media comprising of a set of instructions for
2 facilitating access to Web pages, said set of instruction, which when executed by
3 a processor, cause said processor to perform a method comprising:
4 providing a first three-dimensional (3D) module interface to receive
5 requests for Web pages;
6 in response to receiving a request for a first Web page, displaying a second
7 3D module interface including a set of links to a plurality of separate Web pages,
8 each link of said plurality of said separate Web pages including a representation
9 of a number visits to each of said separate Web pages.

1 27. The machine-readable media of claim 24, wherein said set of links to said
2 plurality of separate Web pages are unrelated to said first Web page.

1 28. The machine-readable media of claim 25, wherein said representation of
2 said number of visits to each of said separate Web pages includes a graphical
3 representation.

1 29. The machine-readable media of claim 25, said method further including:

2 in response to a selection of one of said set of links to said plurality of
3 separate Web pages, providing a Web page corresponding to said selected link.

1 30. The machine-readable media of claim 27, wherein said set of links to said
2 plurality of separate Web pages are displayed in response to paying a fee.

1 31. The machine-readable media of claim 25, wherein said set of links to said
2 plurality of separate Web pages are related to said first Web page based on a
3 predetermined criterion.

1 32. The machine-readable media of claim 25, wherein displaying said second
2 3D module interface including said set of links to said plurality of separate Web
3 pages includes scrolling said 3D module interface across a display of a client
4 computer.

1 33. The machine-readable media of claim 27, wherein said representation of
2 said number of visits to said separate Web pages includes multiple icons
3 corresponding to a number of visits to a web page.

1 34. The machine-readable media of claim 27, wherein said representation of
2 said number of visits to said separate Web pages includes an icon having a
3 graphical representation corresponding to a subject matter of a respective web
4 page.

ABSTRACT

5 A method and system of facilitating access to web sites is disclosed. In one embodiment, the method as performed by the system includes providing a first three-dimensional (3D) module interface to receive requests for Web pages. In response to receiving a request for a first Web page, displaying a second 3D module interface including a set of
10 links to a plurality of separate Web pages. Each link of the plurality of Web pages includes a representation of a number visits to each of said separate Web pages. In one embodiment, the representation of the number of visits to a Web page includes a graphical representation. In addition, in one embodiment, displaying the second 3D module interface including the
15 set of links to the plurality of Web pages includes scrolling the second 3D module interface across a display of a client computer.

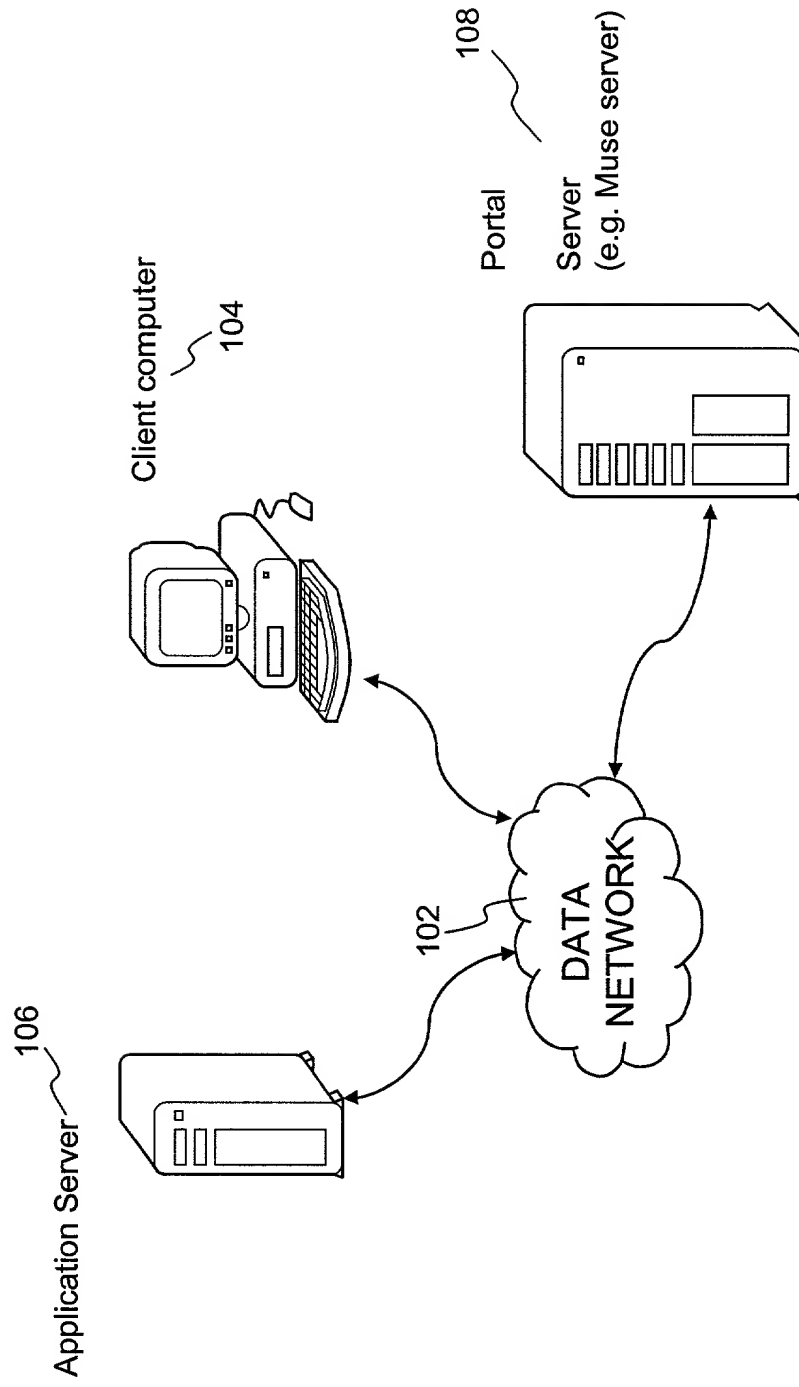


Fig. 1

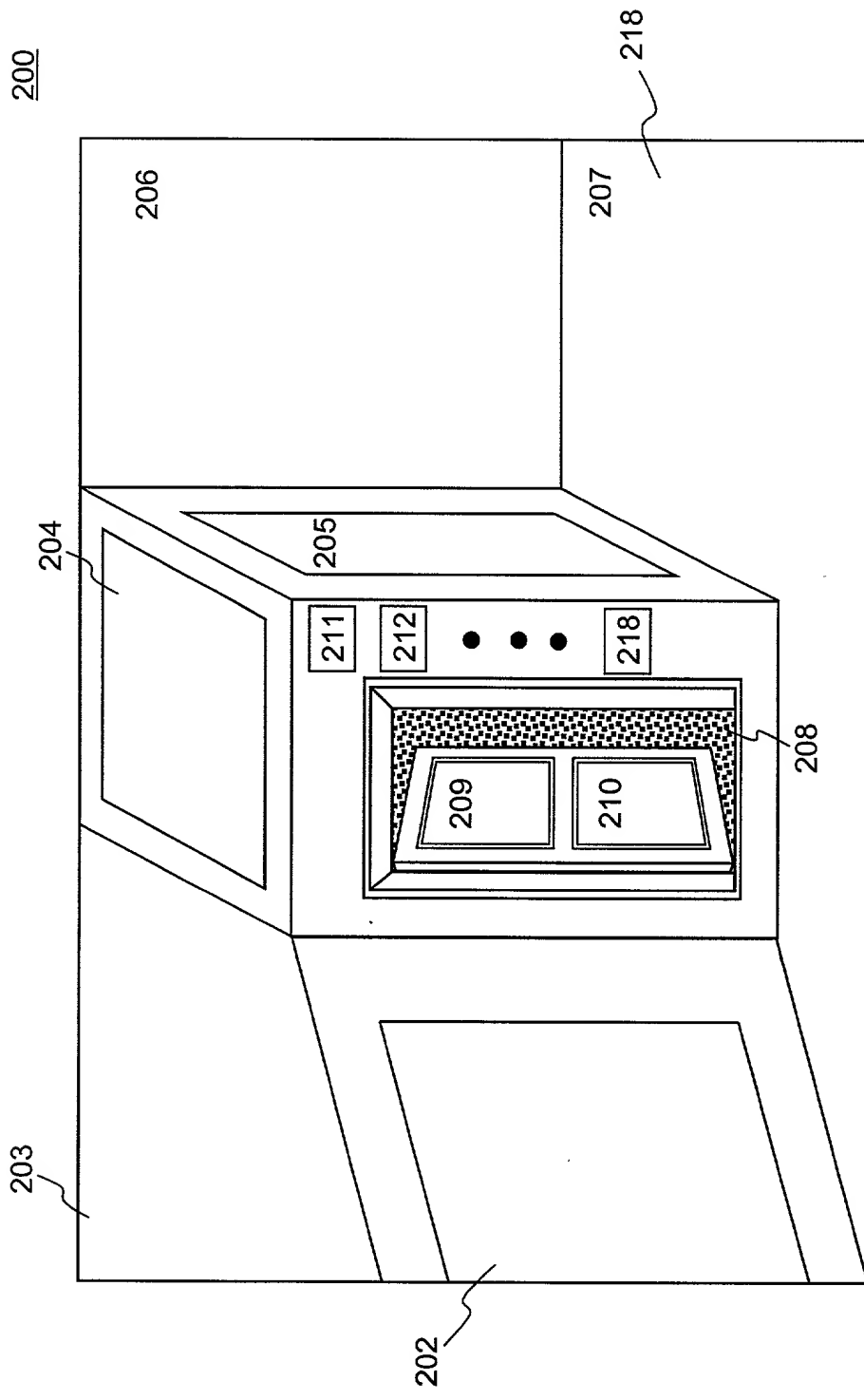


Fig. 2A

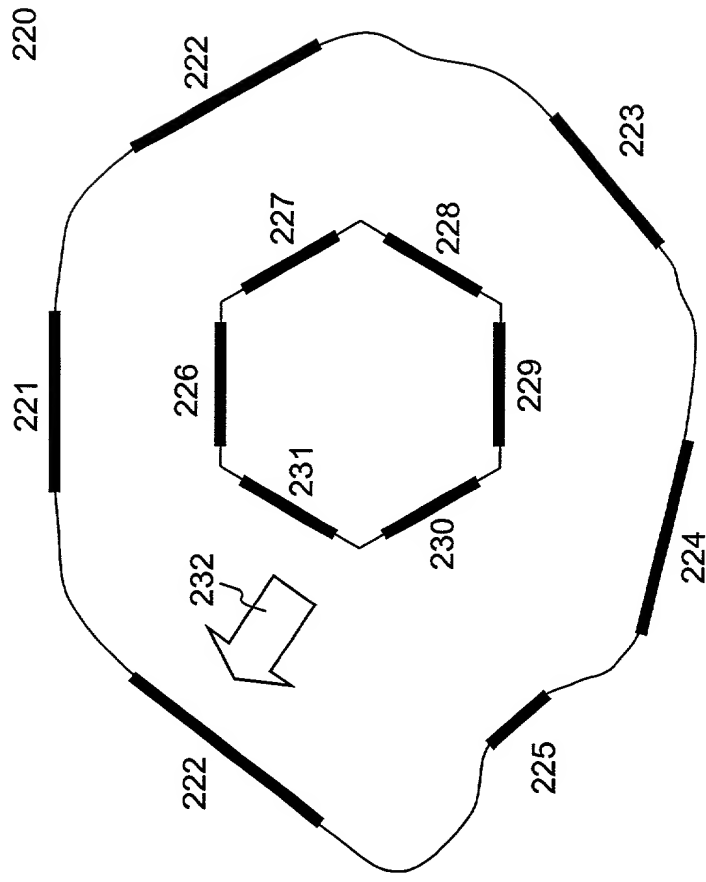


Fig. 2B

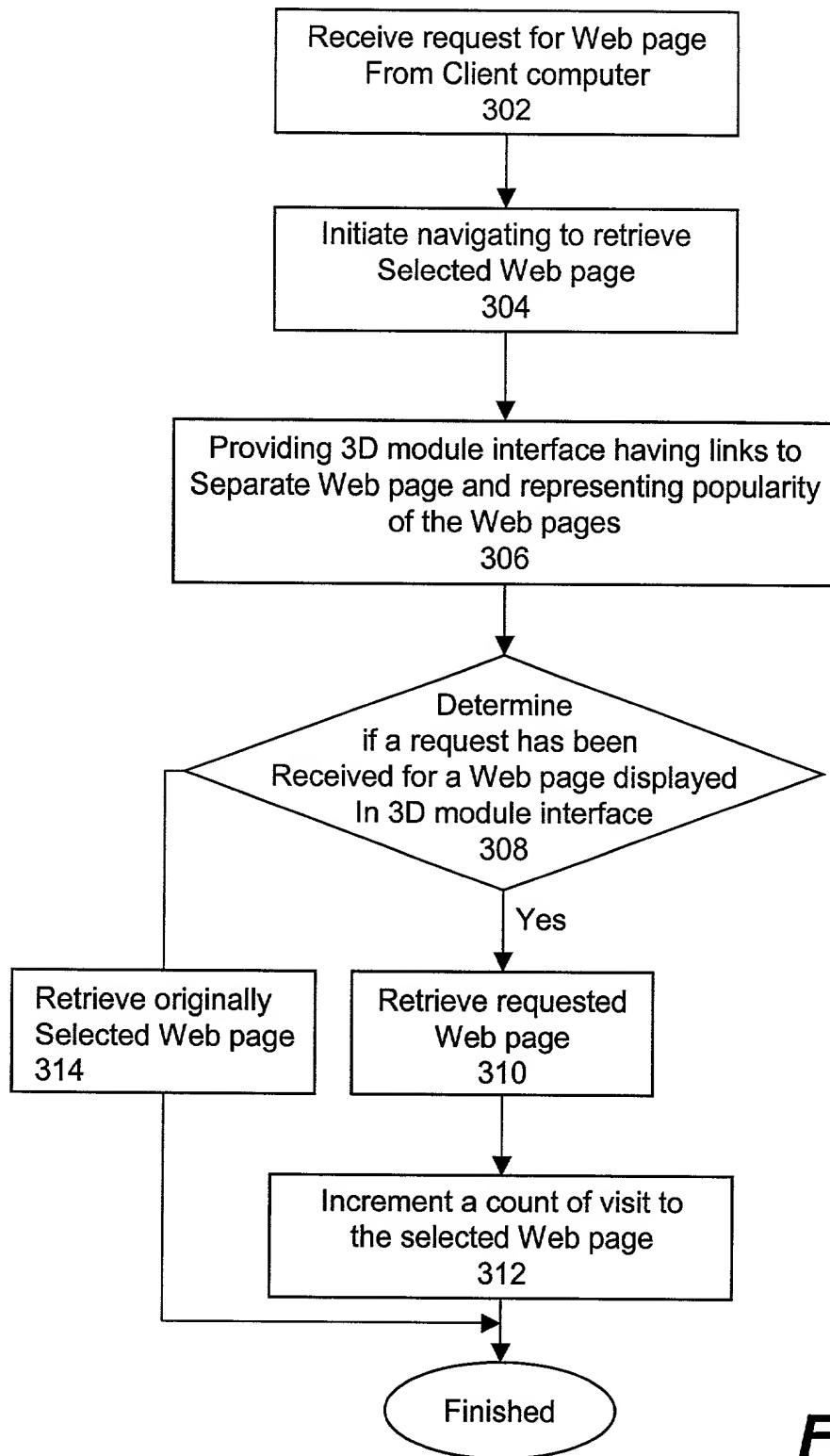


FIG. 3

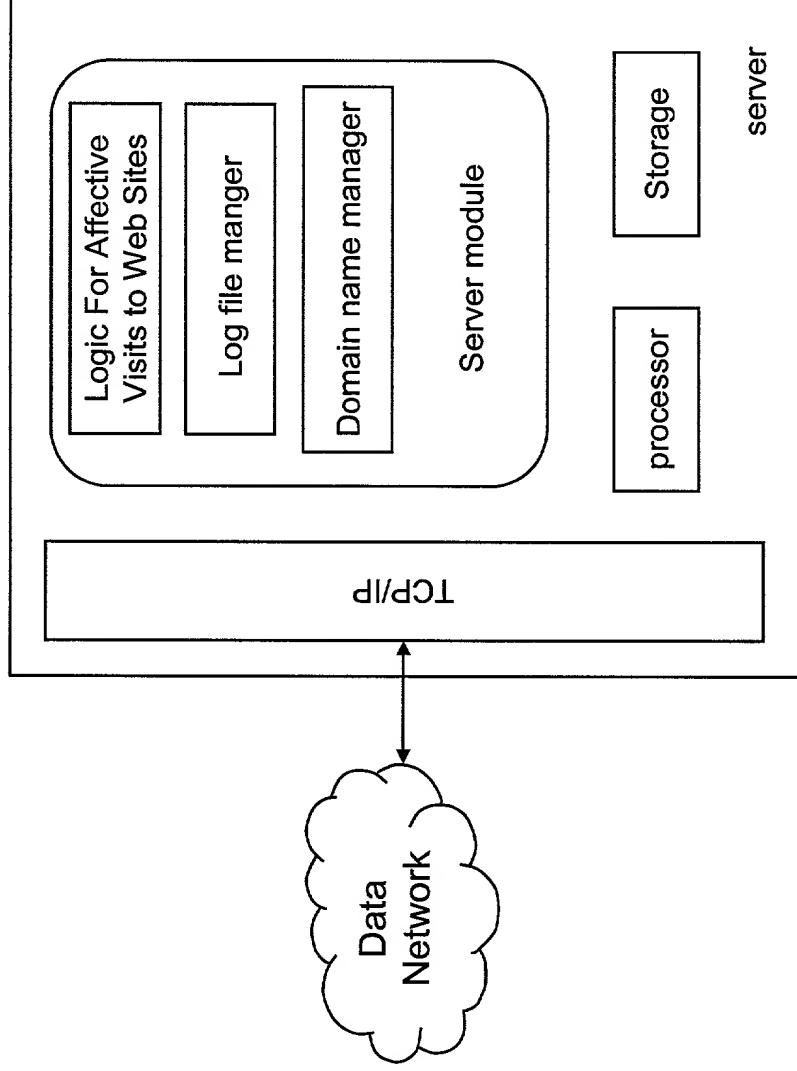


Fig. 6

Attorney's Docket No.: _____

Patent

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below, next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first, and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first, and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

Method and System for Attracting Visits to Web Sites

the specification of which

 X is attached hereto.
 was filed on _____ as
United States Application Number _____
or PCT International Application Number _____
and was amended on _____
(if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claim(s), as amended by any amendment referred to above. I do not know and do not believe that the claimed invention was ever known or used in the United States of America before my invention thereof, or patented or described in any printed publication in any country before my invention thereof or more than one year prior to this application, that the same was not in public use or on sale in the United States of America more than one year prior to this application, and that the invention has not been patented or made the subject of an inventor's certificate issued before the date of this application in any country foreign to the United States of America on an application filed by me or my legal representatives or assigns more than twelve months (for a utility patent application) or six months (for a design patent application) prior to this application.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(a)-(d), of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority
Claimed

_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>

I hereby claim the benefit under title 35, United States Code, Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

_____ (Application Number)	_____ Filing Date
_____ (Application Number)	_____ Filing Date

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

_____ (Application Number)	_____ Filing Date	_____ (Status -- patented, pending, abandoned)
_____ (Application Number)	_____ Filing Date	_____ (Status -- patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby appoint the persons listed on Appendix A hereto (which is incorporated by reference and a part of this document) as my respective patent attorneys and patent agents, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith.

Send correspondence to John Ward, BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR &
(Name of Attorney or Agent)
ZAFMAN LLP, 12400 Wilshire Boulevard 7th Floor, Los Angeles, California 90025 and direct
telephone calls to John Ward, (408) 720-8300.
(Name of Attorney or Agent)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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Inventor's Signature  Date Feb 25th 2000

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Full Name of Third/Joint Inventor _____

Inventor's Signature _____ Date _____

Residence _____ Citizenship _____
(City, State) (Country)

Post Office Address _____

Full Name of Fourth/Joint Inventor _____

Inventor's Signature _____ Date _____

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(City, State) (Country)

Post Office Address _____

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B

Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 Duty to Disclose Information Material to Patentability

(a) A patent by its very nature is affected with a public interest. The public interest is best served, and the most effective patent examination occurs when, at the time an application is being examined, the Office is aware of and evaluates the teachings of all information material to patentability. Each individual associated with the filing and prosecution of a patent application has a duty of candor and good faith in dealing with the Office, which includes a duty to disclose to the Office all information known to that individual to be material to patentability as defined in this section. The duty to disclose information exists with respect to each pending claim until the claim is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration, or the application becomes abandoned. Information material to the patentability of a claim that is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration need not be submitted if the information is not material to the patentability of any claim remaining under consideration in the application. There is no duty to submit information which is not material to the patentability of any existing claim. The duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability is deemed to be satisfied if all information known to be material to patentability of any claim issued in a patent was cited by the Office or submitted to the Office in the manner prescribed by §§1.97(b)-(d) and 1.98. However, no patent will be granted on an application in connection with which fraud on the Office was practiced or attempted or the duty of disclosure was violated through bad faith or intentional misconduct. The Office encourages applicants to carefully examine:

- (1) Prior art cited in search reports of a foreign patent office in a counterpart application, and
- (2) The closest information over which individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application believe any pending claim patentably defines, to make sure that any material information contained therein is disclosed to the Office.

(b) Under this section, information is material to patentability when it is not cumulative to information already of record or being made of record in the application, and

- (1) It establishes, by itself or in combination with other information, a prima facie case of unpatentability of a claim; or
- (2) It refutes, or is inconsistent with, a position the applicant takes in:
 - (i) Opposing an argument of unpatentability relied on by the Office, or
 - (ii) Asserting an argument of patentability.

A prima facie case of unpatentability is established when the information compels a conclusion that a claim is unpatentable under the preponderance of evidence, burden-of-proof standard, giving each term in the claim its broadest reasonable construction consistent with the specification, and before any consideration is given to evidence which may be submitted in an attempt to establish a contrary conclusion of patentability.

(c) Individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application within the meaning of this section are:

- (1) Each inventor named in the application;
 - (2) Each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and
 - (3) Every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application.
- (d) Individuals other than the attorney, agent or inventor may comply with this section by disclosing information to the attorney, agent, or inventor.